

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method of delivering television programming to a subscriber using tiered video, the method comprising:

5 associating a first video program with a first channel;
associating a second video program with a second channel;
receiving from a subscriber input device a channel selection;
sending to a television associated with the subscriber,

10 2. A method of delivering television programming to a subscriber using tiered video, the method comprising:

receiving from a subscriber input device a channel selection for display on a television;

15 associating video programs with a plurality of channels;
sending at least one of the video programs to the television without regard to the channel selection.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the video programs comprise advertisements that are targeted to the subscriber based on a profile associated with the subscriber.

20 4. A method of delivering television programming to a subscriber using tiered video, the method comprising:

receiving, at a set top terminal, a television signal;
extracting individual television programs from the signal;
associating the programs with channels available for selection by a subscriber using a user input device, wherein the programs are displayed on a television associated with the subscriber;

25 receiving user information associated with the subscriber;
storing the user information in a user profile;
associating an advertisement with the user profile;
associating the advertisement with a channel;
30 displaying, on the television, the program associated with the channel selected by the subscriber; and

displaying, on the television during a break in the selected program, the advertisement, wherein the advertisement is associated with a different channel than the selected program, and wherein the step of displaying the advertisement comprises:

switching the television to the channel associated with the advertisement;

sending the advertisement to the television; and

returning the television to the channel associated with the selected program after sending the advertisement.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving user information comprises collecting information about viewing habits of the user.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving user information comprises receiving demographic information, and wherein the step of associating the advertisement with the user profile comprises using a network controller to target the advertisement to the subscriber based on the demographic information.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving the television signal comprises receiving a television signal sent to a plurality of subscribers having different user profiles, and wherein the step of displaying the advertisement comprises displaying for each of the subscribers the advertisement associated with the subscriber's user profile, whereby different subscribers watching the same program on the same channel may view different advertisements based on their user profiles.

8. A set top terminal for use with a television delivery system that uses tiered programming to deliver video programs to subscribers, the terminal comprising:

means for receiving a television signal;

means for extracting individual programs from the signal;

means for receiving a program channel selection from a user input device;

means for sending a program associated with the selection to a television, the program being associated with a first channel; and

means for sending, to the television, a commercial associated with a second channel.

9. The terminal of claim 8, wherein the means for sending the commercial comprises means for switching the television from the first channel to the second channel

before the commercial is displayed on the television, and means for returning the television to the program channel after the commercial is displayed.

10. The terminal of claim 9, wherein the means for switching and returning comprise means for switching and returning without indicating to a subscriber that the television has changed channels.

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